IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Page 3, amend the paragraph beginning on line 9 to read as follows:

On the other hand, as a means for improving the change of electric resistivity (ΔR) of the spin valve film, utilization of an oxidized surface film has been studied in recent years. This is a means of disposing an oxide film on the surface of the spin valve film to increase ΔR. However, when the oxide film is disposed on the surface, oxygen diffuses from the oxide film to the magnetic layer to bring about problems such that the magnetic layer is oxidized to deteriorate the magnetic characteristic or stresses caused by oxide in the oxide film propagate to the magnetic layer to deteriorate the magnetic characteristic.

Page 11, amend the paragraph beginning on line 5 to read as follows:

As a Comparative Example 2, a spin valve type magnetic head of a structure in which the oxide protective layer is not oxidized and not having the high conductance oxidized stopper layer was also manufactured as a Comparative Example 1. Fig. 4 shows a lamination structure thereof. While the preparation procedures are identical with those for the magnetic head shown in Fig. 1 to Fig. 3, excepting for not by way of a step of exposing the surface to an oxygen-containing atmosphere. The thickness for the Ta layer is 17 Å ~~17~~ as large as 3 nm in order to prevent auto-oxidation due to aerial oxygen from progressing as far as the boundary between the Ta layer and the NiFe layer.

Page 14, amend the paragraph beginning on line 5 to read as follows:

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Fig. 10 shows a relation between ΔR and Ta film thickness of a ~~spindle~~ spin valve type magnetic head according to this invention in which the thickness of the Ta film as the oxide protective layer is changed. The film structure is glass/MnPt/CoFe/Cu/CoFe/Cu/Ta. It can be confirmed that a particular large ΔR can be obtained when the Ta film thickness is 1.0 nm or less.